

A

# REVIEW

OF THE

# STATE

OF THE

# ENGLISH NATION.

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Tuesday, November 12. 1706.

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**I** Am astonish'd, that any one can help seeing the Safety, Settlement and Perpetuity of the establish'd Churches of either Kingdom, entirely wrapt up in the UNION; and indeed only to be secured by it.

Hitherto the *Scots* have been jealous of *England's* putting upon them Episcopacy, Tyranny, &c. And I cannot say, it has always been without Cause, and in Case of Ruptures, it may not yet be without Cause; Wars, different Sovereigns, and a thousand Casualties and Uncertainties, to which that Church as now establish'd, is subject, may expose Her to strange things, both from *England* without, as distinctly and disunitedly consider'd, *which after the QUEEN, no body can answer for*; and from a numerous and doubly disaffected Party at home.

Who, I say, in Case of those things, shall answer for what may or may not befall the present establish'd Churches? I dare say, no Man, that has a true Zeal for either of them, can say, he is easie in their present Condition, abstracted from this Union.

Upon an Union all these Fears vanish, 'tis for ever render'd impossible to overthrow the Settlement of either Church; but by subverting the Constitution, by absolute Arbitrary Government, and the openest bare-fac'd Tyranny. The Church, and the Constitution, the Spiritual and Temporal Liberty, have the same Sanction, depend upon the same Security, are defended by the same Power, demanded by the same Right, twisted and connected together, cannot fall but by the same Disaster, nor stand but by the Support of one another.

'Tis

'Tis true, Tyrannies may happen, and they may, and are much more likely to do in *Scotland* under this present unsettled Posture as to Succession, than otherwise; and therefore they must still be more safe in a Union, than they are now, and with this Addition, that then all *Brissin* will be concern'd for their Liberty, and they will demand it as their undoubted indisputable Right: Which Right the other can never consent to abrogate or make null, without making it lawful, by the same Majority, to lose their own, and so should one Day come to suffer by the same Experiment.

And indeed this is the only Way to reconcile that strange Absurdity, of which I have taken Notice elsewhere, now growing up in both Nations, viz. *The Danger of the Church!* That *England* should say, Her Church will be in Danger, and *Scotland* say, Her Church will be in Danger: If both these can be true, I confess, it has something very odd in it. But what is yet more absurd, is, That this should be from an Union! Bleis us, Union-work this! How can that be? 'Tis the Nature of Union to preserve, not destroy; to secure, not endanger; to confirm, not undermine. No, Gentlemen, if either of your Churches are in Danger, it will be for Want of the Union: So, and no other way, the Absurdity may be reconcil'd, and both Churches be in Danger.

In Union, Love, Peace, Charity, and mutual Assistance are natural Consequences; and can these pull down any Church? Whenever any Party attempts upon the other, the Union is broke; 'tis no more the thing, and can no longer bear the Name. When the Union is broke, the Constitution is overthrown; for one Link of this Chain being broken, the whole Chain is render'd useless; the Force of the whole depending upon the Continuity of its Parts; The Fundamental is destroy'd, the Government dissolved, and the whole Island becomes a Mob, one universal Rabble. Just as in the Case of a Tyrant dispensing with the Laws, and setting up Arbitrary Power; Property ceases, Authority dissolves; Constitution suffocates, and the National Capacity dies.

It is true, human Wisdom can make nothing indissoluble. This Union may be

broke; so may *Magna Charta*, so may the Constitution. But, Gentlemen, you have the same Security for your Church-Settlement, as you have for your Lives, Liberties and Estates, and the same on one side, as you have on the other.

But say some, fill'd with Jealousies of remote Possibilities in Behalf of *Scotland*, even the Legislative may be bias'd, and a Parliament may come, that shall rescind the Settlement of the Church of *Scotland*.

Put this into *England*. A Parliament may come, that may dissolve the Constitution, that may rescind the Union, that may sacrifice the whole Kingdom; It is absurd in its Nature, the Union in its Being is the very Constitution, the Life and Soul of great Britain, as to Government: And to say, a Parliament may come, that may break the Constitution, is to say, a Parliament may be mad; possess'd, and *Felo de se*. As a Parliament they cannot do so, they cease from that Moment to be a Parliament, and become a House of Tyrants, and a Den of Robbers, nay, and of the worst Sort of Robbers, stripping those they come to protect.

If they would do this, therefore, they cannot without dissolving their own Being, annihilating their own Body, and committing all imaginable Absurdities.

They may dissolve themselves, but original natural Right must remain. If they dissolve the Form, *whither shall it return?* To its Primitive State it cannot, because that is dissolv'd; to Confusion it must not, because Right must be preserv'd: Whenever therefore a Parliament destroys the Constitution, by which a Nation is form'd, that Parliament ceases, and the Power reverts to original Source to form a new one.

Thus the Nature of the thing is its own Security, and there needs no Addition of other Force; if there does, the Mouths of those Gentlemen must be stopp'd, in His Grace the High Commissioner's Speech to the Parliament of *Scotland*, That his Grace is empowered to consent to what may be further necessary.

What can be made more firm? Are there any Ligaments in the Law, qualified to bind the Church and Constitution together, so as that one cannot be hurt without the other;

other; they are offer'd to the *Scots*, let them take 'em, and tie it as fast, as *Laws* or *Oath* can bind, or the *Sacra Imperii* of any Nation can be made,

After this, what shall we say, is there any thing in the *Scruples* of some in either of the establish'd Churches, which goes beyond the real Security of the Church?

I wish, those Gentlemen would consider, whether it be any more than a *Scruple*? And whether all the *Obligation*, they think themselves under, be not limited by Possibilities? Whether it can be understood they should be bound to do, that which they cannot really wish, the publick Good and present Circumstances consider'd, were in their Power to do?

Let such Gentlemen consider, how far their Security, as well as Judgement, will be called in Question in this Case,

Whether really securing the Church, which they embrace as truly and only Orthodox, be not the most effectual *Scop* they can take to pull down all false Churches, and consequently a full Discharge of the sacred Obligation they think themselves under?

Uncertain as things are, the Church of Scotland is far from safe; and I should be excusable, if I should say, nothing but Miracle or an Union can make it so. He, then that effectually establishes the true Church of Christ in the World, effectually suppresses and pulls down all other Churches in the Language of his Capacity; as he assists to place that Church in a Posture of Victory over all her Enemies, by a Liberty of using all her spiritual Weapons, viz. The superior Doctrine and Sanctity of her Ministry; and I wish, there were no other Contention between the two Churches.

## MISCELLANEA.

IN my last *Miscellanea*, I introduc'd Mr. Hodges treating *England* in a very odd, and wholly new Manner, as to their National Crimes; and I promis'd in my next to show you, Gentlemen, your National Picture, as drawn by this excellent Limner—— I shall only make good my Word to you, and give it you in his own Words; my Observations may perhaps come after.

Having begun in my last to tell the *Scots* with a true Air of Pharisaical Hypocrisy, How much better they are than the *English* Nation, and therefore that in the Matter of a Union, they should begin with a stand off, *I am more Holy than thou*, he goes on.

" There, meaning in *England*, by the  
" Slackness of Ecclesiastick Discipline, drink-  
" ing in of false Doctrines, and spreading  
" erroneous Opinions, the Devil hath got  
" such a Way, Sin is become so exemplary,  
" tempting and uncontroll'd; the Mercies  
" of Heaven so openly despis'd, and God  
" so manifestly provok'd; that if it were not  
" for the Sake of many godly there, and for  
" their daily Confessions and Prayers, *Eng-  
" land* must have long ago fallen under some

" extraordinary and dreadful Effects of  
" God's Displeasure.

" And how long these may be withheld,  
" where the Increase of Sin does so far  
" overgrow the Increase of Grace, who can  
" tell?

" There the Face of their Church is over-  
" spread with *Aminianism*, *Socinianism*, *Pe-  
" rist Ceremonies*, and a cold, lazy and  
" lifeless Form of Worship, having neither  
" any thing like Discipline, nor either pub-  
" lick or private Catechising.

" Many of those, who most set up for  
" Knowledge, Parts, Wit and Sense, above  
" their Neighbours, are hid or open Own-  
" ers of Deism, preferring blind Natural, to  
" the Heavenly Light of reveal'd Religion,  
" and treating in Ridicule the Holy Scrip-  
" tures, Regeneration, the imputed Righte-  
" ousness of Christ, and the Fundamental  
" Doctrine of three Persons in the God-  
" head, both in Discourses and publick Wri-  
" tings, without any publick Search or  
" Censure.

" Their Self-Murthers and other Mur-  
" thers abound, some think, more than in  
" any

" any Part of the World besides.  
 " Boldness, Impiety, licentious Prophaneness, and all Manner of horrid Wickedness is there arriv'd to such a Height, as was never chargeable upon *Sodom and Gomorrah*.

" And tho' this perhaps may appear to some a too heavy Charge; yet it is all far short of what I heard a godly Minister confess in Prayer, innumrating the Sins of *England*, the last Fast-Day ordered by Her Majesty's Gracious Proclamation, on *Wednesday* the 20th of *March*.

" I am perswaded, that is, many of the sincerely godly in *Scotland* had heard your Sins confess'd, and the Judgments threatned against *England*, which I heard in that Prayer, and like Judgments threatned against *England* for their abounding in Impiety, under so great Light of the Gospel; and their obstinate Continuance in Impenitency, under the great Deliverances and so great Multitudes of Favours, Victories, and other Mercies, that God is pleas'd to heap upon them, which I heard in a Sermon last Thanksgiving-Day, *Thursday, June 27*. They would, tho' omitting the Consideration of what of the like Nature hath been threatned against *England*, by some of the most godly Ministers of *Scotland*, tremble to think of so uniting with *England*, as to become ONE PEOPLE with them, tho' instead of the Author's six hundred thousand Pounds, they were to send them six Millions; yea, tho' it were possible, that they could send them whole Mountains of Gold and Silver.

" For when they come to a more serious and well digested Consideration of this Matter, I suppose, they are like to find, that they can never so incorporate with *England*, as to become ONE PEOPLE, and National with Respect to Trade, Wealth and Riches, but they must at the same time incorporate with them, so as to contract a Share in the Guilt of all their provoking National Sins, which then become theirs, as well as *England's*; whereby they must certainly become lia-

ble to a Share in all the Plagues, Punishments and Judgments, that upon the continuing of their Impertinency, God, long-suffering, but not always suffering, shall think fit to inflict upon them.

" I suppose, that many in *Scotland* are like to think; That these Debts to the Justice of God, by them voluntarily assum'd and charg'd upon themselves, by becoming ONE PEOPLE and ONE NATION, may sometime prove far heavier, than all the publick civil Debts of *England*; wherein they also engage themselves, and may produce such Consequences of their Coalition, as all the Wealth, they can propose to themselves by it, tho' really far above what they fancy, can never be able to compensate.

Here is a terrible Charge, Gentlemen, and if it were true, it would be very bad with us——Some of it indeed I can detect, as that there is no private or publick Catechising in the Church of *England*——But I hint all this for another Reason, and my Application shall come at the latter End of it——In the mean time you may see in this, the Use one Nation may make of another Nation's Inmoralities, and not to recriminate upon any: Mr. *H—es*, who they say, is the Author of this Book, is in this very unfair with *England*; because he has not determin'd the Balance of Sins between the Nations, and thereby propos'd, how this Matter might be adjust'd——

I shall conclude his Charge in my next, and make my farther Remarks upon it; to which I refer.

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